

# Architecture 458: Cultural & Ethical Considerations for Global Practice

Spring 2010

Tuesday and Thursday: 14h20 to 15h35, Geren Auditorium

**Instructor of Record:** Rodney Hill  
**Office Hours:** MW-11-12 & TT 11-12

**Teaching Assistant:** – gakornegay@gmail.com  
**Office Hours:** 09h00 to 10h00 Monday and Wednesday

---

# SYLLABUS

*“Globalisation is the intensification of world-wide social relationships which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by distant events and, in turn, distant events are shaped by local happenings. It is a process which has led to the reduction of geographical, spatial, and temporal factors as constraints to the development of society”*  
Anthony Giddens (Sociologist)

*“Basically we followed Wal-Mart into Canada, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. With Mexico the work was extensive enough to warrant an office. Wal-Mart was moving into those regions, and we were doing work for them”*  
Thomas F Keeter (Vice President, BSW International, Tulsa, Oklahoma) *in* Perkins 2008: 8

*“If you are buying, you can get away with operating in your own mother tongue. If you’re selling, it certainly helps to speak the customer’s language”*  
George Bain (Principal, London Business School) *in* Perkins 2008:12

---

## A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore fundamental cultural and ethical factors in the global designed and built environment. It will examine differences and perceptions of professional business practices across cultures by taking into account social factors. Because social actions occur in spatial settings, buildings and cities will be seen as socio-spatial artefacts that take on specific meaning depending on their cultural contexts. Case studies from around the world, highlighting several cultural milieus and covering most continents, will be presented and discussed.

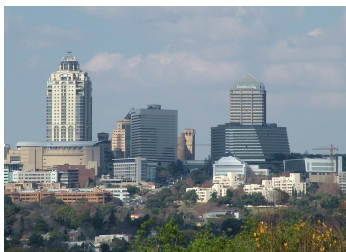
Issues and relationships within the cultural, business, legal and political environments of global practice, as well as differences in the formulation of design briefs, construction contracts, forms of construction, bidding and contract documents in a dynamic new world order will be demonstrated. Ethical practices in different cultures will be highlighted as the basis for best practice.

The course is designed to expose you to the rigors, challenges and opportunities of practicing architecture in a runaway world.

### Prerequisites:

Students may be forced into the class by approval of the Professor of Record or:

ARCH 458            Junior or Senior classification  
                         Graduate Student



Johannesburg, South Africa



## B. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course will introduce you to the contextual peculiarities of different places. Architecture, as a place-making activity, is a process requiring an understanding of the significance of space and time. This significance is the result of cultural practices. By cultural practice is meant social activities that reproduce social systems, and that provide meaning in everyday life. In this sense architectural designs are seen as the means for, and outcome of, social activities.

In addition to reinforcing the concepts of basic inquiry, research and problem solving, the course will encourage you to think critically about the social and cultural consequences of practicing in a global environment. An emphasis will be placed on cultural differences in the design, appreciation and construction of buildings in a global context.



The world at night: Light emissions reflect concentrations of economic activity

**C. REQUIRED READING**

Perkins B (2008) International Practice for Architects, Wiley: New Jersey (Copies in TRC)  
 Friedman T (2006) The World is Flat, Penguin: London (Audio book in TRC and Library)  
 Florida R (2005) The World is Spiky, The Atlantic Monthly (October) (Copies in TRC)

**SUGGESTED READING**

Florida R (2004) The Rise of the Creative Class, Basic Books: New York (Chapters 3,4,12 and 13)  
 Hillier B and Hanson J (1984) The Social Logic of Space, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge (Introduction)  
 Sommer R (1969) Personal Space: The behavioral basis of design, Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs  
 Hall E (1966) The Hidden Dimension, The Bodley Head: London (Chapters 11 and 12)  
 Axtell, R (1997) Gestures: The Do's and Taboos of Body Language Around the World, Wiley: New Jersey  
 Morrison T (1994) Kiss, bow or shake hands: how to do business in sixty countries, Adams: Massachusetts  
The Europa World Year Book (On Library reserve)  
[www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov) (See various world fact areas)  
[www.culturegrams.com](http://www.culturegrams.com) (Online from library)

**D. COURSE SCHEDULE**

The following schedule outlines the course lecture topics and assignments. Any assignment turned in late, after the end of the class period, up to one week from due date, will be docked a letter grade. Documentation will be required for medical extensions and University Excused Absences. *No credit will be given for projects turned in over one week late.*

DATE	DAY	LECTURE TOPIC
Jan. 19	Tu	Introduction
Jan. 21	Thu	
Jan. 26	Tu	Meg Lassarat-CFO Mustang Engineering
Jan. 28	Thu	Jess Corrigan-Vice President-HKS-Africa
Feb. 2	Tu	Harold Adams Former CEO RTKL(Korea, Japan, China and Taiwan)
-		

Feb. 4	Th	Harold Adams (Korea, Japan, China and Taiwan) Rodney Hill-Global Practice
Feb. 9	Tu *	<b>Assignment 1- Video on personal space and two different cultures</b>
Feb. 11	Thu	Bonny McLoud & Alan Colyer-Partners-Gensler
Feb. 16	Tu	Franz Erhardt-Global cultural differences.
Feb. 18	Thu	Brian Trubey-HKS Partner and world stadiums
Feb. 23	Tu	Don Wilder -Asia
Feb. 25	Thu	Al Simmons-entrepreneurship
March 2	Tu	<b>Assignment 2. Culture and concrete. PowerPoint presentations</b>
March 4	Thu	Carlos Vegas Principal (Central and South America)
March 9	Tu	Etiquette –class will meet from 6-8 at the University Club for a 7 course meal. Keep journal notes for future use in business interviews, North and South America, Europe, etc...
March 11	Thu	John Richardson (Construction practices around the world)
March 30	Tu	Vallie Miranda-CRS Center (India)
March 25	Thu	William L. Peel, Jr.-Marketing & Entrepreneurship
March 30	Tu	<b>Assignment 3. YouTube video on a spoof on two difference cultures and etiquette</b>
April 1	Thu	Weling He, Wei Yan (Cultural differences in the Pacific Rim)
April 6	Tu	Sammy Mandola-Turner Construction(Russia)
April 8	Thu	Glen Mills, Foster Ndubisi and Craig Babe (Africa, Egypt)
April 13	Tu	Chang-Shang Huang(Landscape architecture in China)
April 15	Thu	Mark Mateker, P.E.-Director, Business Development-KBR Services
April 20	Tu	<b>Assignment 4: Culture and professional practice. Business plans</b>
April 22	Tu	<b>Assignment 4: Culture and professional practice. Business plans</b>
April 27	Thu	Cecilia Giusti-Land Development/Planner-South America
April 29	Tu	Sergio Rosas-international Visualization
<b>May 12</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>1-3 Final-Culture and banquet. PowerPoint presentation-Due at midnight, Tuesday, Dec. 15</b>

#### E. ASSIGNMENTS

All your assignments are evidence-based design. This means that the correct answer is not in the back of the book, or that there is even a correct answer. You may be introducing to the world a unique way of perceiving and designing the environment that has never existed until you created it. You will have to

exercise your imagination, intuition, creativity, and innovation to produce results similar to what the future, culture & ethics will demand for your success.

Assignments will be presented in class. You may utilize PowerPoint, PhotoShop, AutoCAD, animations, videos, MediaPlayer, QuickTime, and so on, to convey your ideas. DVD, VCR and audio facilities are in the auditorium. You may incorporate performance art or any other means of communication. **You must be able to communicate.** Production of written work with a computer is encouraged except where your style of writing is integral to your assignment's presentation. If your printing or handwriting is less than stellar, use the computer, paste and copy. Use spellchecker and proofread all texts. Use freehand sketches to supplement your writings.

### **BREAK OUT OF YOUR OLD "PRESENTATION STYLE" PARADIGM...GET CREATIVE AND EXPERIMENT**

Always include your name, team number, assignment number and due date on the cover page and/or slide. **Do NOT write your complete student ID number on your assignment.** For multi-page work, bind all pages together. Folders/binders are fine, as is a stapler. A stapler is located in the computer lab on the ground floor of Building A and in the Technical Reference Center on the second floor of Building A.

---

#### **If you hand in your assignment on cd-rom/video/webpage then...**

Make certain that electronic files will open on a campus computer. Computers are on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor in bldg. 'A'. Write your own name, team number and assignment number on the label. After grading, your electronic media/video will be returned to you if you want it. If creating a webpage, turn in a one-page printout of the first page/index page showing the address

---

**Note 1: Assignments done as hardcopies must be in 8.5" X 11" format (letter page size)**

**Note 2: Any assignment not completed in a scholarly manner will be returned ungraded**

**Note 3: When making class presentations, remember the auditorium only supports cd, dvd, vhs, and flash drives**

## **F. ASSIGNMENT DETAILS...**

---

Individual Project...

### **DAILY JOURNAL. A record of observations, insights and ideas**

Record your observations, about built space, social activities, and culture, and how these impact global practice. Architects, artists, scientists, engineers and inventors, the core of the global economy's "creative class", keep journals and refer to them often. They keep journals because they are records, or memory banks, of ideas, solutions and prompts to originality. Journals are personal accounts. So, make notes and marks in your journal, not only during every presentation, but also during your observations of day-by-day experiences. Observations should be noted using words, diagrams and sketches. Create design solutions to support the observed culture. Compare cultures using spatial scenarios. Make sketch plans and create architectural concepts that probe spatial concepts in relation to social ideas and cultural practices.

Utilize your readings and observations to prepare questions for the guest speakers. Be as insightful and critical as possible. Highlight in your journal the answers to questions given by the presenters. The presenters offer a wealth of knowledge and you should explore their expertise. Ask questions about culture and practice, as well as ethics and socially responsible designs. Discuss and engage these ideas with your peers.

By the end of the semester, you should have socio-spatial observations that cover most cultures of the world. Your journals, when combined, should provide an excellent overview of architectural behaviour in most cultures. The guest speakers could be also sent copies of your journals.

Hint: Contact the MSC and meet with students from the countries we have just had presentations on, and record these meetings in your journal.

**1. Create a YouTube Video to present in class of around 5 minutes in length illustrating the differences in personal distances and interactions in at least two difference cultures. You are encouraged to interact with students in other cultures to valid your video. There is a student club for every nationality. Post on YouTube as TAMU-personal space 09C-group#....**

Group projects...

**2: CULTURE AND CONCRETE. Create a 5-minute PowerPoint presentation on three different social activities in three separate cultures, showing how you would accommodate each architecturally. Choose three different building types...houses, offices, restaurants, shops, markets, clinics... Your presentation should therefore illustrate nine architectural solutions**

You will be graded on insight and design innovation. Group members will decide the grade assigned to their peers. Pick three different cultures and design solutions that embrace these differences

3: Create a YouTube video on a spoof on two difference cultures and etiquette. You can utilize and bring into your video students from the cultures you are violating. Ask their opinions and they can tell you more how our culture may offend them in ways which we never thought. Post as TAMU-personal space spoof 09C-group#.....

**4: CULTURE AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE.** Create, illustrate and write up three business plans, each related to three cultural contexts that promote entrepreneurship and ethical practice through design and strategic thinking. What are the differences in approach in each culture? What are the accepted norms to market in each culture? Be trans-disciplinary in your approach  
Members of each group will decide the grade assigned to their peers

**FINAL: CULTURE AND BANQUET.** Create a 5-minute PowerPoint presentation that demonstrates cultural differences in relation to entertaining for business in three different contexts. Investigate, explore and research the optimum social and spatial practices for entertaining for business success. Bring one dish from the three different cultures you are presenting. You could invite you contacts from previous videos.

#### **G. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

The grades are determined using a point scale:

90 – 100 Points	=	A
80 – 89 Points	=	B
70 – 79 Points	=	C
60 – 69 Points	=	D
Below 60 Points	=	F

#### **POINTS DISTRIBUTION**

Journal	25 points
Final Examination	15 points
Research Assignments	60 points (15 points per assignment. N=4 assignments)

Note: If found guilty of cheating you will earn an 'F' for the semester. See TAMU Rules and Regulations for specific details.

#### **Students With Special Needs**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring such accommodation, please contact the Office of Support Services for Students with Disabilities in Room 126 of the Student Services Building. The phone number is 845-1637. (V/TTY)

#### **Academic Integrity Statement**

**An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.**

**All syllabi shall contain a section that states the Aggie Honor Code and refers the student to the Honor Council Rules and Procedures on the web**

**<http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor>  
<<http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor>>**